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UNITED STATES FOREIGN TRADE IN HIDES AND SKINS IN 1954

The United States until recently has been a net importer of hides and skins. During 1954 exports of cattle hides exceeded imports by 4.7 million pieces. In contrast, during 1953 exports exceeded imports by 1.9 million pieces. The exports of calf and kip in 1954 exceeded the imports by 1.4 million pieces, whereas during 1953 imports exceeded exports by 324,000 pieces. Imports of goat and kid skins declined 6.7 million pieces in 1954 while net imports of sheep and lamb skins declined 4.6 million pieces.

HIDES AND SKINS: United States Foreign Trade, averages
1935-39 and 1946-50, Annual 1952-54

	Averages				
	1935-39	1946-50	1952	1953	1954
	Pieces	Pieces	Pieces	Pieces	Pieces
<u>Calf and Kip:</u>					
Imports	3,181	1,265	1,628	1,904	1,189
Exports	555	593	794	1,580	2,567
Net Imports	2,626	672	834	324	--
Net Exports	--	--	--	--	1,378
<u>Cattle Hides:</u>					
Imports	2,580	1,872	1,230	455	443
Exports	533	868	1,138	2,381	5,178
Net Imports	2,047	1,004	92	--	--
Net Exports	--	--	--	1,926	4,735
<u>Goat and Kid:</u>					
Imports 1/	43,260	36,639	29,716	31,904	25,231
<u>Sheep and Lamb:</u>					
Imports	21,057	24,545	19,325	25,049	20,586
Exports	1,996	696	497	419	586
Net Imports	19,061	23,849	18,828	24,630	20,000

1/ United States exports are negligible.

Foreign Agricultural Service. Compiled from official records
of the Bureau of Census.

IMPORTS:

United States imports of hides and skins declined appreciably in 1954. Imports of calf and kip skins decreased 38 percent compared with 1953, goat and kid skins declined 21 percent, sheep and lamb skins 18, and cattle hides 3 percent. These declines were due in part to an easier demand for hides and skins in the United States; however, in the case of cattle hides and calf and kip skins larger domestic supplies resulting from record levels of slaughter also contributed to the decline in import requirements.

The larger proportion of the imports of calf and kip skins are from Canada. This trade moves both ways across the border but imports from Canada are considerably larger than our exports to Canada.

Imports of calf skin from France in 1954 were 48 percent below 1953. In order to satisfy the demands of the French tanning industry the French Government since World War II has restricted exports of calf skins. In recent years an annual export quota has been set for calf skins of about 8.8 million pounds, salted weight, of which 40 percent was reserved for export to the United States. However, due to the easier demand situation in this country and relatively high prices in France these total quantities have not been taken by importers in this country.

United States imports of cattle hides have declined sharply since 1951. This decline may be partly due to the decline in surplus hides in South America, but the prevailing high level of cattle slaughter in the United States has reduced import requirements. This increase in domestic supplies of cattle hides along with increased competition from leather substitutes has resulted in lower prices, which in turn has attracted foreign buyers of cattle hides.

Imports of goat and kid skins in 1954 totaled 25 million pieces, 21 percent less than in 1953 and 42 percent below the 1935-39 average. This decrease reflects a decline in demand for goat and kid skins in the United States since nearly all of U.S. requirements are imported.

In 1954 imports of sheep and lamb skins totaled 18.7 million pieces, 4.4 million less than in 1953 but 1.2 million more than in 1952. During 1954 imports of pickled sheep skins were appreciably below 1953 but not greatly different from the quantities imported in 1951 and 1952. Imports of woolled sheep skins were substantially below both 1953 and previous years as a result of the low level of wool consumption in this country.

EXPORTS:

The greater part of the United States exports of hides and skins are destined for Canada, Western Europe and Japan. These areas were the recipients of more than 80 percent of our 1954 exports. Exports to Western Germany and the Netherlands increased substantially, while the relatively large shipments to Japan were not greatly different from a year earlier.

Exports of calf and kip skins increased from 1.6 million pieces in 1953 to 2.6 million in 1954; cattle hides from 2.4 million to 5.2 million and sheep and lamb skins from 419,000 to 586,000.

The increase in exports of cattle hides and calf and kip skins is principally the result of the record level of cattle and calf slaughter in the United States and consequently lower prices which attracted foreign buyers. For example, Argentina and Uruguay were the principal suppliers of cattle hides to Western Germany for many years, but a noticeable turn to the United States market occurred late in 1953. In 1954, the United States became the principal supplier of cattle hides to Western Germany. There are two main reasons for this development. First, early in 1954, quantitative restrictions on the import of cattle hide and calf skins from the dollar area were removed, and West Germany buyers hurried to take advantage of the uniform quality hides and skins which United States producers offered at competitive prices or below those prevailing on the World market. Secondly, West Germany buyers were dissatisfied with South American prices, which had been driven up by government manipulations, and by heavy purchases of the communist block countries. Late in 1954, South American hide prices declined, because of decreased communist block purchases. The important fact remains, however, that during 1954, larger numbers of West German leather manufacturers adapted their tanning processes to American hides and skins. United States hide prices continue to be competitive with world market prices.

Table 1. HIDES AND SKINS: United States Imports for Consumption by Country of Origin - Averages 1935-39, 1946-50, Annual 1952 to 1954

Country of Origin	Averages		1952	1953	1954
	1935-39	1946-50			
	1,000 Pieces	1,000 Pieces	1,000 Pieces	1,000 Pieces	1,000 Pieces
<u>Calf and Kip:</u>					
Canada	394	342	702	777	585
Denmark	4	8	37	38	50
Finland	178	42	21	0	0
France	548	80	264	235	123
Italy	19	33	10	45	5
Netherlands	76	16	37	39	18
Norway	103	9	23	8	0
Poland	92	57	201	309	119
Switzerland	25	10	3	39	14
India	67	168	119	129	64
Argentina	156	35	11	0	—
New Zealand	471	149	122	201	200
Others	1,048	316	78	112	11
Total	3,181	1,265	1,628	1,932	1,189
<u>Cattle Hides:</u>					
Canada	550	419	343	303	381
Mexico	29	77	0	0	1
Cuba	14	29	5	14	—
France	23	7	13	14	3
Italy	17	16	8	11	3
Netherlands	5	2	26	7	1
Switzerland	7	1	2	13	7
India	22	11	80	71	27
Argentina	1,309	712	645	3	1
Brazil	400	216	18	5	1
Uruguay	55	65	15	0	0
Australia	31	16	0	0	0
New Zealand	40	14	7	0	0
Others	78	287	68	14	18
Total	2,580	1,872	1,230	455	443
<u>Goat and Kid:</u>					
Haiti, Rep. of	385	674	514	594	447
Arabia	0	775	293	810	61
India	13,160	10,916	10,866	8,974	7,401
Pakistan	0	2,009	1,638	1,912	2,096
Argentina	2,523	1,232	283	955	536
Brazil	4,172	3,028	1,360	4,055	2,557
Peru	837	757	482	579	770
Venezuela	812	573	775	663	379
Br. E. Africa	726	2,134	2,735	2,702	1,982
Br. Somoliland	0	954	678	693	422
Ethiopia	682	3,084	3,135	2,842	2,707

Continued

Table 1. HIDES AND SKINS: United States Imports for Consumption by Country of Origin - Averages 1935-39, 1946-50, Annual 1952 to 1954. (continued)

Country of Origin	Averages					
	1935-39	1946-50	1952	1953	1954	
	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	
	Pieces	Pieces	Pieces	Pieces	Pieces	
Italian Africa	133	679	680	953	0	
Nigeria	2,084	4,037	2,855	2,880	2,095	
Un. of So. Africa	902	980	1,000	748	568	
Others	16,844	4,807	2,422	2,544	3,210	
Total	43,260	36,639	29,716	31,904	25,231	
Sheep and Lamb:						
United Kingdom	1,419	1,216	1,014	1,277	707	
Iran	4	346	762	2,004	1,029	
Argentina	4,030	4,175	581	2,495	566	
Brazil	1,143	77	114	30	7	
Un. of So. Africa	1,098	316	151	15	0	
Australia	1,173	3,509	1,629	2,729	1,320	
New Zealand	8,699	11,087	13,869	14,404	13,306	
Others	3,491	3,819	1,205	2,095	1,835	
Total	21,057	24,545	19,325	25,049	18,770	

Foreign Agricultural Service. Compiled from official records of the Bureau of Census.

Table 2. HIDES AND SKINS: United States Exports by Country of destination, Averages 1935-39 and 1946-50. Annual 1952-54

Country of Destination	Averages		1952	1953	1954
	1935-39	1946-50			
	1,000 Pieces	1,000 Pieces	1,000 Pieces	1,000 Pieces	1,000 Pieces
<u>Calf and Kip</u>					
Canada	170	265	196	313	349
Belgium	10	31	28	62	106
Germany	13	39	5	53	342
Italy	6	24	36	123	136
Netherlands	25	135	17	123	515
United Kingdom	12	24	4	89	240
Japan	247	28	468	757	656
Others	72	47	40	60	223
Total	555	593	794	1,580	2,567
<u>Cattle Hides</u>					
Canada	127	278	411	430	386
Mexico	4	1/	3	63	206
Belgium	1	64	8	37	133
Germany	3	41	4	88	760
Italy	3	50	5	22	35
Netherlands	24	93	34	278	1,243
United Kingdom	37	132	3	215	431
Yugoslavia	1/	12	56	237	319
Japan	260	36	552	845	880
Others	74	162	62	166	785
Total	533	868	1,138	2,381	5,178
<u>Sheep and Lamb</u>					
Canada	3/1,009	505	402	343	362
Mexico	3/ 11	1	62	—	19
Belgium	3/ 11	12	—	10	0
France	3/ 38	73	31	30	79
Hungary	3/ 53	5	—	—	0
United Kingdom	— 80	10	—	12	60
Others	— 28	132	3	24	66
Total	1,230	738	498	419	586

1/ Less than 500. 2/ Includes Goat and Kid. 3/ For 1939.

Foreign Agricultural Service. Compiled from official records of the Bureau of Census.

Table 3. HIDES AND SKINS: United States Imports and Exports
by type and description, averages 1935-39 and
1946-50, Annual 1952-1954

Type and Description	Averages		1952	1953	1954
	1935-39	1946-50			
	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
	Pieces	Pieces	Pieces	Pieces	Pieces
Imports 1/					
Calf and Kip:	3,181	1,265	1,628	1,932	1,189
Wet salted	2,385	738	1,374	1,611	995
Dry or dry salted	796	527	254	321	194
Cattle Hides:	2,580	1,872	1,230	455	443
Wet salted	2,381	1,414	997	372	325
Dry or dry salted	199	458	233	143	118
Goat and Kid:	43,260	36,639	29,716	31,904	25,231
Dry or dry salted	41,518	36,067	28,460	31,127	24,411
Green or pickled	1,742	572	1,256	777	820
Sheep and Lamb	21,057	24,545	19,325	25,049	18,770
Woolled dry or					
green salted	2,726	5,550	1,245	2,020	328
Slats-dry	3,481	2,150	650	833	462
Pickled-not split	14,840	15,965	16,150	19,893	16,277
Pickled-fleshers					
and skivers	10	880	1,280	2,303	1,703
Exports 2/					
Calf and Kip	555	593	794	1,580	2,567
Wet salted	N.A.	547	794	1,578	2,566
Dry or dry salted	N.A.	46	3/	2	1
Cattle Hides:	533	868	1,138	2,381	5,178
Wet salted	N.A.	798	1,128	2,370	5,165
Dry or dry salted	N.A.	70	10	11	13
Sheep and Lamb	4/ 1,996	4/ 696	498	419	586
Wet	N.A.	470	460	359	438
Dry	N.A.	226	38	60	148

1/ For consumption. 2/ Excludes re-exports.
3/ Less than 500 4/ Includes Goat and Kid.

Foreign Agricultural Service. Compiled from the official records of the Bureau of Census.

